

American Association
Of Medical Assistants, Inc.
(AAMA)

**STATE
MANAGEMENT
GUIDE**

September 1995

Revised 2003

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All documents for the AAMA have been developed in accordance with policies established by the AAMA Board of Trustees/Endowment. Any discrepancies in policy statements inconsistent with current policies should be brought to the attention of the AAMA Executive Office and the Board of Trustees. The AAMA Board of Trustees apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The American Association of Medical Assistants, Inc. (AAMA) consists of a combination of volunteer members and a paid staff. The Board of Trustees and members of the House of Delegates are all active members of AAMA who volunteer their time and efforts with some expenses reimbursed by the AAMA or the state societies. Staff members are all employees of the AAMA at the executive office in Chicago.

The House of Delegates (HOD) is the governing body of the national organization. It amends the bylaws, conducts the election of officers and acts upon such business that comes before it. (See section on “AAMA Delegates and Alternates” for description and qualifications of delegates.)

The Board of Trustees (BOT) consists of elected officers. These officers are the president, the vice-president, the secretary-treasurer, speaker of the house, vice-speaker of the house, immediate past president and six trustees. The BOT conducts the business of AAMA between annual meetings, appoints members to committees/strategy teams, evaluate the progress of the boards, strategy teams and committees, employs an Executive Director and has charge of the property and financial affairs of AAMA.

The AAMA bylaws are printed each year and are available from the executive office in Chicago by calling 1-800-ACT-AAMA. These bylaws should be used by members as reference. These bylaws contain information about the purpose of AAMA, classes of membership, dues, officer and trustee duties and qualifications, delegate and alternate qualifications, House of Delegates responsibilities, Board of Trustees responsibilities, etc. regarding the association.

Application forms for elected officers and trustees are sent to each society president and president-elect annually for proposed nominees. The names with qualifications are submitted to the nominating committee chair. If the nominee meets the qualifications and eligibility requirements, the state president and nominee are notified and the candidate’s profile is printed in the pre-convention issue of the *CMA Today*. Nominations may be made from the floor of the HOD provided the nominating committee chair and the speaker of the house have documentation of qualifications and eligibility requirements before the opening of the House.

Volunteer Leadership application forms to serve on a national strategy team, special committee or boards are printed each year in *CMA Today*. The form is completed by the member and returned to the vice-president and the executive office. The vice-president appoints all committee members with confirmation by the BOT at its pre-convention meeting. All application forms are kept on file by the president for committee vacancies or appointments to a specialized ad hoc committee that may occur during the year.

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

ADDRESS:	American Association of Medical Assistants, Inc. 20 N Wacler Drive, Suite 1575 Chicago, IL 60606-2903
TELEPHONE:	1-800-228-2262 OR 312-899-1500

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (CONT'D)

THE CERTIFYING BOARD

The Certifying Board (CB) is responsible for preparing and administering the examination for certification and recertification. The members of the CB are appointed by the BOT. The standing rules and policies and procedures of the CB determine the term of office, number and qualifications of its members. All grant funds and examination fees received by the CB must be used only for the purpose of that board and their budget must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Certifying Board consists of three certified practicing medical assistants, two certified medical assisting educators and one physician. Because of the enormous amount of charges to this board, ad hoc/task force groups are used whenever possible to assist in the design and implementation of its projects. Yearly reviews and updates are conducted regarding the certification process.

THE CONTINUING EDUCATION BOARD

The Continuing Education Board (CEB) is responsible for developing a complete program of continuing education. All guided study programs, CEU approval processes for AAMA, state and chapter programs, designing educational programs for all levels, handbooks for CEU Program Directors and participating in leadership training are all a part of the functions of this board.

The Continuing Education Board consists of six certified practicing medical assistants and two certified medical assisting educators. This board is assisted by task forces as deemed necessary to fulfill its charge.

THE AAMA ENDOWMENT

The AAMA Endowment is a separate non-profit organization established as a public foundation devoted to charitable and educational purposes. It has jurisdiction over the activities of the Curriculum Review Board and the Maxine Williams Scholarship Fund.

THE CURRICULUM REVIEW BOARD

The Curriculum Review board (CRB) is responsible for the accreditation process of post-secondary medical assisting programs which include scheduling survey visits, recruiting surveyors, reviewing reports and periodic revisions of the Essentials (requirements which a medical assisting program must meet in order to be accredited), training surveyors, and developing documents to assist with the accreditation process.

The Curriculum Review Board consists of four educators (one administrator and three certified instructors representing both public and proprietary institutions), two certified practicing medical assistants and one medical liaison.

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (CONT'D)

THE MAXINE WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Maxine Williams Scholarship Fund was established for medical assisting students and named for AAMA's first president, Maxine Williams. It was founded in 1959 and annually awards up to five \$ 500 scholarships to students seriously interested in pursuing a career in medical assisting. The Maxine Williams Scholarship Fund is supported by tax-deductible donations and memorials.

NATIONAL STRATEGY TEAM AND COMMITTEES

The term of office for most strategy teams and committees is one year (from the AAMA annual meeting to the next annual meeting). Appointments are made from application forms submitted by members for all committees except the nominating committee which is elected by the AAMA House of Delegates. The application form is printed in *CAAA Today* each year with complete instructions and deadline dates.

National committee work is done almost entirely by mail or electronic mail. Occasionally telephone conferences are required. Conference calls are scheduled in advance with a prepared agenda. It is extremely important for those who are appointed as committee members to fully participate and complete all assignments in a timely manner as directed by the strategy team manager/committee chair. The work of AAMA is dependent upon each member's cooperation and dedication; therefore, it is sometimes necessary to replace a non-participating member in order for projects to continue. National special committees are created as deemed necessary by the president, the Board of Trustees or the HOD. Committee chairs and members are appointed by the president. The term of office and function of special committees are determined by need.

Allowable expenses (such as postage, long distance telephone calls, etc.) are reimbursed by submitting expense vouchers available from the executive office.

The AAMA has adopted the use of strategy teams in the areas relevant to the current AAMA Strategic Plan. These areas include membership recruitment and retention, marketing the profession, certification, and preparing future leaders of the organization.

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is charged with soliciting, screening and presenting a slate of nominees for office and trusteeship in accordance with the AAMA bylaws.

Four members of this committee are elected by ballot by the HOD following nominations from the floor. The chair is elected by and from the BOT at its post-convention meeting.

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (CONT'D)

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE (CONTD)

The committee mails to each society president a letter with nominating application forms requesting names of eligible candidates for officers and trustees. Nominations must be postmarked to no later than April 1. The nominating committee examines each nominee's qualifications and eligibility. The names of eligible candidates are sent to each society' president at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting and are also printed in the pre-convention issue of *CMA Today*. The nominating committee must also be available to review qualifications and eligibility of any candidate nominated from the floor of the HOD. The chair presents an annual report with the slate of nominees for officers and trustees at the annual meeting.

The committee also notifies each candidate of the details for campaigning, position statement and speech for the presentation of candidates at the annual meeting.

Nominating committee members should have attended at least one HOD to understand the workings of the Association and have a thorough understanding of the qualifications and eligibilities required for candidates.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A NEW STATE SOCIETY

The first step is to send a notice to medical assistants in the state for the purpose of deciding to form an affiliate state society of AAMA. This notice should include the place, date, time and purpose of the meeting.

The Membership Department at the executive office in Chicago can provide the organizational committee with the names of members-at-large, mailing labels, AAMA bylaws, a state management guide, AAMA fact sheet, organizational chart, membership and certification brochures. If desired, the name and address of the state society presidents of neighboring states are available. These members can be valuable assets as questions arise and may be available to attend your organizational meeting.

Steps to follow at organizational meeting:

1. Organizing committee decides who will call meeting to order.
2. After the above named person calls the meeting to order, she/he asks for nomination from the floor for a temporary chairman (chairman pro tern).
3. Chairman pro tern is elected by majority vote
4. Chairman pro tern opens floor for a nominations for a temporary secretary (secretary pro tern) who is elected by majority vote.
5. Chairman pro tern asks for the adoption of a parliamentary authority, which is usually Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, most current edition and the adoption of rules for debate.
6. Chairman pro tern recognizes the person who will fully explain the purpose of the meeting. This person is usually a member of the organizing committee.
7. Chairman pro tern allows for debate, calls for the vote and announces the results of the decision.

Once the decision is reached to form a state society, a committee to draft bylaws is appointed by the chairman pro tern. These society bylaws must conform to the AAMA bylaws. Sample bylaws are provided in this manual for assistance with the process. The first set of bylaws is presented at the next meeting and is adopted by majority vote after all amendments are agreed upon. Any future amendments to the bylaws will require a 2/3 vote for adoption.

After adoption of the bylaws (which take effect immediately), the chairman pro tern recesses the meeting for the purpose of enrolling members. Those who wish to join sign a permanent record sheet which is filed with the organizational papers. These members are considered charter members of the society.

The chairman pro tern reconvenes the meeting and has the secretary pro tern read the names of those who signed the enrollment record. This serves as a official roll call and only those members whose name appear on this roll are allowed to vote and participate in the nominations and election of the officers who will replace the temporary chairman and secretary. The chairman pro tern calls for nominations from the floor for the officers as outlined in the bylaws.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A NEW STATE SOCIETY (CONTD)

Election is usually by ballot and must be so stated in the bylaws and is by majority vote. The newly elected officers usually immediately replace the chairman and secretary pro tern.

The newly elected president then notifies the AAMA President in writing at the executive office requesting affiliation with AAMA. The bylaws, names of officers and membership list must accompany this letter. The AAMA BOT will review these documents and vote on acceptance. The AAMA President will inform the state society of the BOT decision. A charter from AAMA is usually presented at the next AAMA annual meeting after acceptance of dues and approval of the BOT.

Membership in a state society is required by the AAMA bylaws unless there is no constituent society; therefore, those persons who were members-at-large prior to the formation of the society are required to maintain membership in the new society.

AAMA will issue only one charter per state. States will issue charters to local chapters within their geographic limits as these chapters are formed.

It is suggested that a state society have a minimum of 25-30 members to allow greater opportunity for leadership potential since the work of the society can be more easily delegated.

SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Societies usually hold quarterly meetings and have quarterly board of directors meetings. The society officers are elected by the membership at the society's annual meeting and these officers may have more than one job assigned to them depending on the size of the society membership.

The president presides at all meetings of the general membership and board of directors, appoints all committees except the nominating committee, and is an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. The president also represents the state society at all functions, including state and national meetings.

The president should be familiar with parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, most current edition and be comfortable asking for guidance from the parliamentarian. The president, however, does make the final ruling.

He/she appoints a parliamentarian and any other appointed officers in accordance with the bylaws and with the approval of the board of directors and fills all vacancies of committee chairs and all board members except the president-elect or vice-president. Should the office of president-elect or vice-president become vacant, a special election may be held or the office remains vacant until the next annual meeting.

The president appoints all committee chairs and members as outlined in the bylaws and any special committees as directed by the general membership with the approval of the board of directors.

He/she may attend committee meetings as an ex-officio member, except the nominating committee, but it is not required to attend. However, the committee should keep the president informed of its activities and progress on all projects.

He/she prepares a packet of general information for the members of the board of directors at the beginning of the year. This packet should contain a directory of names, addresses and phone numbers of each officer and committee chairs, and an outline of the duties of each officer/committee chair to assist the member in fulfilling these duties. A copy of society bylaws and policy manual should be included.

The president should send copies of all correspondence to the officers so they will be informed of all activities involving the society.

He/she should prepare an agenda for each meeting. Ideally, a copy of the agenda should be available to all members attending the meeting. If this is not possible, copies of the agenda should be given to all officers and the parliamentarian.

The president should attend the state presidents and presidents-elect meeting at the AAMA annual convention, House of Delegates and Board of Trustees meetings so he/she will be fully informed on the AAMA activities.

SOCIETY PRESIDENT (CONTD)

The president should prepare a calendar of events and deadlines for the year and keep all officers and committee chairs informed of all activities.

He/she should be able to co-sign all checks for the society.

At the close of the annual meeting, a list of new officers, the names of delegates and alternates to the AAMA HOD and any notice of state or chapter dues changes should be forwarded to the executive office of .AAMA by the president.

The president should verify that an audit of the society financial records has been done and will be presented at the next meeting following the close of the fiscal year. The president should verify that all tax returns required by the IRS have been filed on time.

He/she submits a report of AA/MA activities to the state as soon as possible after the close of the AAMA annual convention.

The president also verifies that the bonding of the president and treasurer has been obtained and that the invoice for this bond has been paid.

He/she establishes procedures to build and maintain the society through membership recruitment and strategic planning.

SAMPLE AGENDA

_____ SOCIETY OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

Place:
CALL TO ORDER

Date:

Establish a quorum

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CORRESPONDENCE

TREASURER'S REPORT

OFFICERS REPORTS

President
President-Elect
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Immediate Past President

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget and Finance
Bylaws
Certification
Public Policy
Education
Program
Publicity
Membership
Ways and Means

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Time:

SAMPLE DIALOGUE FOR CHAIR

CALL TO ORDER: Rap the gavel one time. “The meeting will please come to order.” After verifying with the secretary, announces that a quorum is present. If a quorum is not present, the president announces that no business can be conducted and adjourns the meeting.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: “The secretary will now read the minutes of the last meeting.” The secretary then reads the minutes unless the minutes were mailed to the membership, in which case the president says, “The minutes of the last meeting were mailed to the membership. Are there any corrections to the minutes?” After a pause, “The minutes are approved as read (or circulated) or as corrected.”

CORRESPONDENCE: “Will the secretary please read any correspondence?” Any correspondence that requires action of the membership will be addressed under new business.

TREASURER’S REPORT: “The treasurer will now give the financial report. Are there questions of the treasurer? This report will be filed for audit.” It is appropriate at this time to ask for any non-budgeted bills to be presented for approval. “The following bills have been submitted for approval. The chair will entertain a motion regarding these bills.” A member should then move to either pay or deny payment of the bills. Any budgeted item does not have to be brought before the membership and payment can be approved by the president.

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS: The chair calls for the officer and committee reports. Each officer should report his/her activities since the last meeting including the secretary. The minutes are not the report of the secretary but represent the events and business of the meeting. After each report, the chair states, “The report of the _____ will be filed for reference.”

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: This is no longer referred to as “old” business. The president does not call for unfinished business since he/she will know from the minutes of the last meeting any items that were not completed. The chair states, “The next item of business is _____ .”

NEW BUSINESS: After the chair addresses any new business he/she then asks the membership, “Is there other new business to come before the membership?”

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The chair now makes all announcements of which he/she has knowledge then asks the membership, “Are there any other announcements?”

SAMPLE DIALOGUE FOR CHAIR (CONTD)

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn is not necessary but a member may move to adjourn. This motion requires a second and a majority vote and is not debatable. The chair, however, may state “If there is no further business and no objection, the meeting will adjourn.” After a pause, the chair then states, “This meeting is adjourned.”

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

There are some basic requirements for conducting a successful meeting:

1. Begin and end the meeting on time.
2. Prepare and distribute an agenda.
3. Be familiar with and have present current copies of the chapter, state and AAMA bylaws.
4. Be familiar with and have present a copy of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, most current edition or some other appropriate parliamentary reference book.

Beginning and ending the meeting on time will do more for the general morale of the members than can be measured. If the agenda is prepared in advance, the items will be in the correct order and the members will know which items are scheduled for discussion and will be prepared to express their views in a more orderly manner. It is imperative to be familiar with the bylaws of all three levels of AAMA and have them available for reference during a meeting. While it is important for the presiding officer to have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure, it is far more important that the meeting be conducted with fairness to all members.

It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to keep the discussion focused on the agenda item being considered. If an item of business cannot be resolved in a reasonable length of time, it should be referred to a committee for further consideration and brought back to the next meeting.

The president may prepare a script for his/her use at the meeting if this would assist him/her in conducting a successful meeting.

SOCIETY PRESIDENT-ELECT OR VICE-PRESIDENT

Not all societies have a president-elect so the duties of these offices are usually interchangeable.

If the society does have a president-elect, this officer will automatically assume the presidency at the close of the annual meeting if the bylaws so provide. If there is no president-elect, the bylaws usually provide that the vice-president will automatically assume the presidency at the close of the annual meeting. The reason for this automatic assumption of presidential duties is to provide for continuity of society activities, ideals and goals.

The duties may include being the chair of the program committee and appointing the parliamentarian, any other appointed officers and committee chairs for the upcoming year for approval at the annual meeting of the society

His/her year will be a period of training and preparation and should be used wisely. This officer should attend all general membership and board meetings as part of the preparation for the upcoming year. He/she may ask to attend by invitation all committee meetings except the nominating committee. Remember that the vice-president must be ready to assume the office of the president should an emergency or vacancy arises so he/she must be as knowledgeable as the president of all society activities.

This officer should become familiar with society bylaws, parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, most current edition.

If the bylaws provide, he/she shall accompany the president as the official society representative.

He/she selects the location for the installation of officers, the theme of the installation and the installing officer and prepares an orientation of the new board members for a smooth transition of leadership (optional according to society policy).

RECORDING SECRETARY

The recording secretary should have a good knowledge of correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. He/she should also have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure to ensure that the minutes do record the business of the society as its history.

The recording secretary should attend all meetings of the society and board of directors. The minutes of these meetings shall be kept in separate record books. He/she should be the custodian of all record books and papers belonging to the chapter.

If he/she is unable to attend a meeting, he/she should notify the president as soon as possible so the president can make arrangements for a secretary pro tern. The recording secretary should obtain the minutes of the missed meeting and present them to the general membership and/or board of directors at the next regular meeting. These minutes are to be maintained in the permanent record of the society.

The minutes should include the headings listed on the agenda, include all motions and results of action taken. Minutes should be as brief as possible and sentences should be concise. Each subject matter should be typed in a separate paragraph. The secretary's opinion is never recorded in the minutes.

The recording secretary should read the minutes of the previous meeting and make any corrections necessary. After the approval/correction, the date should be entered at the end of the minutes and the minutes are then filed in the permanent record of the society.

The minutes should be sent to the president within the period of time stated in the society's policy manual. If there is no policy manual, the usual period of time is five working days after the meeting. Ideally, the minutes should be sent to all members of the executive board. Minutes of the board of directors meetings should be sent to all members of the board.

In some instances, the minutes contain the names of the persons present for the meeting. However, the more common method is for the recording secretary to maintain a roll book or a sign-in log as a record of those in attendance. This also eliminates the necessity of listing those in attendance in the minutes. The roll book/sign-in log should become a part of the permanent record of the society.

If the president and vice president are absent at a meeting, the recording secretary calls the meeting to order and presides at the election of a chair pro tern for the meeting.

NOTE: Some societies have a minutes review committee which reviews and corrects the minutes prior to distribution to the membership. Minutes may still be open for correction by the membership if your society chooses to use a minutes review committee.

It is suggested that the Secretary be provided a copy of the AAMA Guidelines for Chapter/State Secretary which includes general information about minutes and samples of formats for minutes.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY (Optional)

In most state societies, it is usually necessary to have a corresponding secretary. The duties of this position are to assist the president and other officers with handling the society correspondence.

The corresponding secretary reports briefly on the correspondence sent in the name of the society and reads any correspondence received that requires action by the society. It is not necessary that every piece of correspondence be read but only a brief summary of the correspondence is reported.

All correspondence sent on behalf of the society is typed on official society letterhead using proper sentence structure and form. The correspondence should not contain any misspelled words or other error since it is a reflection of the society itself. The corresponding secretary may sign letters with her title, indicating he/she has written on behalf of the society. The president may wish to sign these letters himself/herself. Personal comments should not be included in letters written on behalf of the society.

Copies of all correspondence should be sent to the members of the executive board and chairs of any committees mentioned in the correspondence.

A permanent file of all correspondence should be maintained.

The corresponding secretary usually writes the official thank you from the society to all speakers at the general membership meeting.

If there is no need for a separate corresponding secretary, the recording secretary performs these duties.

TREASURER

The treasurer has a very important role in the society. He/she is required to keep accurate financial records of income and disbursements of all monies in the society's name. He/she should, therefore, be adept in bookkeeping and knowledgeable of the federal and state tax regulations of non-profit organizations, especially if the society is incorporated.

He/she should attend all meetings of the general membership and board of directors and may also serve on the budget and finance committee. In some societies, the treasurer serves as the chair of the budget and finance committee. The bylaws should state the treasurer's position on the budget and finance committee.

The treasurer will receive and deposit all monies of the society and pay all invoices by society check upon approval of the president and/or board of directors. He/she should not pay any invoice that is not budgeted until the invoice has been approved by the board of directors and/or membership for payment.

He/she should keep an accurate record of all members and their status.

He/she should present a financial report at the all meetings of both the board of directors and general membership. This report should be copied to all members of the board of directors. Financial records should be kept current and available for audit according to society bylaws and/or policy manual.

The treasurer should be prepared to work on the books regularly so these records will be both accurate and up-to-date. The bank statement should be reconciled monthly.

All tax returns (if any) must be filed by the specified deadline as necessary.

After installation of the new officers, be sure the books have been audited before accepting them from the previous treasurer.

Should the chapter wish to continue using the same checking account, the bank would require a resolution stating which date the new officers were elected and their names. Signature cards signed by the officers entitled to sign checks should be given to the bank promptly. It is recommended that a copy of the signature cards be maintained in the treasurer's file.

One of the first functions of a new society treasurer is to secure a checking and/or savings account for the society. This should be done following the election of officers so there will not be a delay in depositing of checks and in paying chapter debts.

Each society should secure a federal tax identification number. Form SS4 from the Internal Revenue Service can be obtained from the bank or the IRS and is simple to complete. After filing with the IRS, the society will receive an identification number that should be used on all its bank accounts. This notification should become part of the permanent record of the treasurer.

TREASURER (CONTD)

Each society should secure its own number and not use the number assigned to the AAMA or the Social Security number of any member.

The accounts which best serve the society's interest should be opened with society's approval. The minutes should reflect the type of accounts authorized, the number of accounts authorized, the number of signatures required for withdrawals, the number of persons authorized to sign, the officer who will usually sign for withdrawals, and who may sign during the unavailability of the usual signatures.

The following types of checks are usually available to non-profit organizations.

1. One-signature check which can be signed by the treasurer or the president, in this case, a voucher system should be used so that approval is obtained first from an officer other than the one signing the check before the check is issued.
2. Two-signature check, which is signed by two out of three or four officers, authorized to sign checks. This is usually the president and the treasurer.
3. Under no circumstances should one person sign one or more blank checks leaving the second person to fill in the payee, amount, etc. If this is done, the check becomes a one-signature check and the purpose of having two signatures is negated.

A bank will usually require the federal tax identification number, a copy of the bylaws, the resolution authorizing the opening of the account, etc., and signature cards to open a new account.

The treasurer should be bonded as well as any other person authorized to sign checks in the society's behalf. The number of authorized persons should be stipulated in the bylaws and/or policy manual.

It is recommended that a blanket or individual bond be purchased by the society for, at least, the society treasurer. It is also a good idea to have the bond cover all persons authorized to sign checks. The cost for a bond is usually reasonable and may be purchased for all officers as managers of the society funds.

This should not be construed to imply any dishonesty but as a recognition that monies can be stolen en route to the bank, get lost in the mail, or through some other human error, the society needs protection and usually the ones who are covered under the bond will feel better because of this insurance coverage.

The amount of insurance coverage should reflect the amount of annual cash flow, not just the average bank balance. More money than one would realize at first flows through society treasury—funds from dues, seminars, fund-raising projects, etc.

TREASURER (CONTD)

If the bond covers individuals, then the insurance company needs to be notified annually of the names and addresses of those authorized to sign checks and/or withdraw money from the bank. If the bond covers the position, the insurance company does not need to be notified when officers change. There may be a premium discount if the bond is purchased for a multiple year period.

Other tips include:

1. Never use correction fluid to correct errors. Instead draw a single line through the error and write the correction above.
2. Always use ink.
3. Never make checks payable to cash.
4. Do not use miscellaneous.
5. Try not to void checks.
6. Be sure to number and title pages and entries in the ledger book.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

The speaker of the house presides over the House of Delegates or the General Assembly of the society. In some societies with a general assembly, the society president presides over this body.

The speaker should have a good knowledge of the society and AAMA bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, most current edition be well organized and be able to contact a large meeting with firmness and impartiality.

The duties of this office also include the appointment of a credentials committee, a teller committee, pages, parliamentarian and timekeeper, compilation and mailing of the delegates' packet within the time specified in the society bylaws (usually 60-90 days before the meeting); attend all meetings of the board of directors and executive committee and sets up the House of Delegates.

In some societies, the Speaker is also responsible for appointing members to serve on reference committees. The reference committee hearings are usually conducted on bylaws, officers and committee reports and miscellaneous business and are held for the purpose of allowing the members of the society to express the opinions and concerns about the business of the society that is to be presented to the House of Delegates.

Each society that elects a speaker of the house should also elect a vice speaker of the house to assist the speaker and to preside in the speaker's absence. Some societies include the duties of the speaker and vice-speaker with those of the president and vice-president and do not elect a speaker and vice speaker.

PARLIAMENTARIAN

The parliamentarian should be knowledgeable about the general principles of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, most current edition and the chapter bylaws. He/she is an advisor to the president and the members on points of parliamentary procedure.

He/she gives clarification on parliamentary matters when requested by the president or members, but the final decision rests with the president.

He/she serves, without vote, at the general membership meeting, board of directors and executive board meetings.

He/she is available for assistance and instructions to the election tellers, and monitors the vote tally.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

The immediate past president is a member of the executive board and the board of directors and acts as an advisor to the president.

He/she may be assigned various duties in the bylaws but the most common are parliamentarian, coordinator of installation banquet, bylaws, historian, or program director.

CHAPLAIN (Optional)

The chaplain is appointed by the president and is responsible for delivering invocations and benedictions, usually at the opening and closing of meetings, banquets, and other events. He/she may also be asked to deliver a memorial for a member who has died. Other duties may include phone calls, cards, flowers, etc., at the discretion of the president and/or policy manual.

HISTORIAN

The historian is appointed by the president for the purpose of keeping a pictorial and narrative history of the state's activities. Most states have more than one history book so one may be presented to the president at the end of his/her year and one presented to the state society for its records

The history book includes newspaper clippings, invitations to state functions, pictures, programs from state events and installation of officers, etc.

A budget should be set by the society for the history book and the historian should submit vouchers for covered expenses as well as a final report of expenses at the end of the year.

In some cases, the state society will request that chapters send clippings, pictures, etc., to the state historian to be included in the state history book.

The state history book(s) should be brought to the state meetings periodically so the members can browse through it.

An alternate should be appointed for the historian in case of an illness or emergency of the historian.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

A yearly audit for financial records is essential for good business practice in any organization to see that the society finances are in order.

The audit committee is appointed by the president and should consist of no less than three (3) people. The president and treasurer should not be members of this committee.

The books should be audited and the audit complete within 30 days of the society's fiscal year end.

The committee must have access to the checkbook register, all cancelled checks, bank statements, income and expense ledgers, all receipts for interest paid on investments and all financial statements for the year to be audited.

1. Bank deposits must total the same as the income recorded in the ledger.
2. Checks written must total the amounts shown as expenses in the ledger.
3. All voided checks must be accounted for.
4. The beginning balance plus deposits minus checks written should equal an ending balance that coincides with the balances shown on the financial reports.
5. Bank charges and interest income must be accounted for.

It is recommended that each committee member do an independent audit and then meet to finalize its findings and complete the audit report together. A written report and a final financial report should be prepared with the results of the audit and any recommendations and/or suggestions. All discrepancies must be explained and resolved. This report is presented to the general membership for adoption.

The incoming society president and treasurer should not accept the signature cards and the books until the audit report is finalized and, ideally, accepted by the executive committee of the board of directors.

The audit committee should indicate the areas where the budgeted amounts were not met or were exceeded.

Be sure that the books are closed on the last day of the chapter's fiscal year and that no deposits were made or checks written after this date.

SAMPLE AUDIT REPORT

INCOME:

Dues	250.00
Ways and Means	1000.00
Donations	100.00
Interest Earned	75.00
Seminars	1500.00
 Total Income	 \$2925.00

EXPENSES:

Postage	200.00
Ways and Means Projects	750.00
Delegates Expenses	425.00
Gifts	75.00
Stationery	250.00
Printing	250.00
Educational Materials	500.00
Publication	400.00
Bank Charges	<u>50.00</u>
 Total Expenses	 2900.00
 Difference between Revenue and Expenses	 25.00
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	2000.00
Fund Balance End of Year	2025.00
 Investment	 5000.00
 Total Cash Available as of last day of fiscal year	 \$7075.00

BUDGET PREPARATION

Each society must have an operating budget in order to ensure that monies are spent for the benefit of all members.

The budget should be presented at the beginning of each society's fiscal year. The general membership should have the opportunity for input into the raising and spending of society monies with a majority vote determining these issues.

The treasurer should be the chair of the budget committee. The committee should consist of no less than three (3) members. The previous treasurer, as well as previous budget committee members, should be asked for input. The budget committee should begin to meet and formulate a budget for the upcoming year at least 2-3 months before the beginning of the new fiscal year. In preparing the new budget, members should have available to them previous year's records which should include the audited treasurer's books as well as reports of all fund raising activities (cost vs. revenue) and all expenses of the society for the previous year. The committee needs to have available all projected costs of the upcoming year to determine the actual amount of monies needed to keep the society fiscally secure.

The budget committee needs to keep a realistic viewpoint in determining the monies that will permit the officers to pay expenses for society functions throughout the year. Not all societies will require the same amount of funds to operate. This will be determined by the society bylaws which direct the expenses for which the society is responsible.

Once the budget has had the final approval of the society members, the business of the society should be able to be conducted without returning to the membership for expenditure approval. The budget can be amended during the year by a majority vote of the membership should a fiscal shortage occur or a special expenditure not in the budget need approval.

Part of the responsibility of the society treasurer is to keep the society officers updated at all times on the bank balances, income and expenses compare to the budgeted amounts. This will allow for adjustments as they are necessary and keep the society fiscally sound. This information should be reported by the treasurer as a part of his/her report at the regular meetings of the membership. The treasurer should be able to produce a copy of the budget, a copy of all bills that have been presented and paid and any other information necessary to substantiate any income or expense that affects the society budget should the executive board or general membership have a question.

A sample budget format is enclosed. Remember this is just a guideline since all societies will differ in their income and expense items. It is important to remember when using this format that revenues and expenses are determined by society locations, community support and resources.

Not included on this sample is reserve fund amount. Some societies do designate a specific amount (\$ 100-\$200) for reserve. This amount is then listed on the treasurer's report as a reserve amount and would not be used except in cases of extreme necessity.

BUDGET PREPARATION (CONTD)

Society officer expenses and society committee expenses should be minimal, with the exception of the publication, membership and public relations committees. These will require monies for postage, printing and special recruitment activities. Stationary needs (e.g., letterhead, envelopes, etc.) should be a society expense and all officers and committee chairs should be supplied from this one expense. Expenses for travel and accommodations for officers should be dictated by the society bylaws. Not all societies are financially able to reimburse for total expenditure but make allowances for partial reimbursement. Each society will need to determine its fiscal ability and then determine what requirements/reimbursement will be allowed for its officers.

It is a good idea to review the finances of the society for the last three years to serve as a guide for averaging income and expenses.

Consider the following carefully during the preparation:

INCOME:

What has the average income from dues been over the past three years? Has there been a yearly increase, decrease or stabilization?

If there are donations, are the amounts about the same and consistent?

Do you have successful ways and means projects that bring in revenue every year?

Do you have an interest-bearing checking account?

EXPENSES:

Average cost of general expenses, supplies, postage, gifts.

Costs for educational sessions, speakers and materials.

Publication expense.

Bank checks charges and/or service charges.

Delegate expense.

SAMPLE BUDGET**INCOME:**

Dues	250.00
Ways and Means Project	2000.00
Donations	100.00
Interest Earned	<u>25.00</u>
Total Income	\$2375.00

EXPENSES:

Postage	200.00
Publication	625.00
Ways and Means Project	200.00
Membership	200.00
Stationery	200.00
Printing	200.00
Gifts	100.00
Delegates Expenses	400.00
Public Relations	150.00
Bank Charges including checks	<u>100.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$2375.00

BYLAWS

Bylaws are the guidelines by which the organization operates. Society bylaws must be in compliance with the AAMA, Inc. Bylaws.

The required articles of any bylaws are: name of the organization, its objective, members, officers, executive board, committees, meetings and parliamentary authority.

Bylaws contain the rights and privileges of members and are so important that they cannot be changed without prior notice to the members and usually require 2/3 vote of the voting body for adoption.

Bylaws should be clear and concise and should not be restrictive. The society may develop a policy manual or standing rules document to outline specific duties and policies that can be changed with a majority vote at any meeting.

Sample society bylaws are available in hard copy or on diskette from the AAMA Executive Office for the convenience of a society in developing or updating its bylaws.

Bylaws should be sent to the AAMA Executive Office for review after they are adopted by the society. Any recommendations made by the AAMA for compliance are incorporated in the society bylaws without vote of the membership but are distributed to the membership as information.

The society president should appoint a bylaws committee each year to review the bylaws.

A policy manual or standing rules manual may also be developed to outline more specific duties of officers and committees, reimbursement policies, guidelines for correspondence, banquet protocol, etc. Either of these documents may be amended by a majority vote at any meeting. They are intended to expand on the bylaws and may not be in conflict with them.

CERTIFICATION

Certification is or should be the goal of all medical assistants. The goal of achieving Certification is one of the most important steps in becoming a professional medical assistant. The CMA credential is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed the Certification Examination administered by the Certifying Board of the AAMA, Inc.

The Certification Examination is a comprehensive test of knowledge actually needed in General, Administrative, and Clinical areas used in the medical office. These areas include anatomy and physiology, terminology, behavioral science, medical law and ethics, medical record management, collections, insurance processing, examination room techniques, medications, injections, laboratory procedures and specimen collection. At present there are 100 questions in each of the three major areas.

To be eligible for the certification examination, an applicant must be a graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES accredited medical assisting program. Contact AAMA at 1-800-ACT-AAMA to obtain the dates and the nationwide test sites the examination is administered. To help applicants prepare for the examination, AAMA provides the "Candidate's Guide to the Certification Examination." The guide explains the test format, and contains a list of study references and a sample examination with answers.

Chapters may wish to form study groups to assist those preparing for the examination. The material provided in the reference list mentioned above is useful in the study group also.

RECERTIFICATION

The next step in the process is to maintain the CMA credential. This is achieved by recertification through continuing education or by taking the Certification Examination. As professionals, we must continuously strive to keep current with new technology, new ideas, and new trends in the health care field.

Since 1988, a CMA must recertify every five years; failure to do so will result in a "not current status." Effective in 2003 a CMA currently employed or actively seeking employment is prohibited from using the CMA credential if she/he is not current.

A CMA may recertify by obtaining Recertification points. To recertify you must obtain 60 Recertification points for the basic CMA. Recertifying specialty credentials in Administrative, Clinical, or Pediatric are only available by the continuing education method and require 20 Recertification points for each specialty credential. An application for Recertification by the Continuing Education Method may be obtained from the AAMA Executive Office.

Recertification points may be obtained by attending seminars, workshops, reading and passing the tests in *CMA Today* articles, and through college classes. These courses must relate to the profession of medical assisting. 20 of the 60 Recertification points must be obtained from AAMA Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Members attending AAMA programs do not pay a CEU registration fee while nonmembers are required to pay a fee. The AAMA Continuing Education Department maintains a list of all AAMA approved courses taken by each member. Transcripts are available free to members via the members only section of the AAMA website www.aama-ntl.org or by calling AAMA at 1-800-ACT-AAMA. Nonmembers are required to pay a fee for a copy of their transcript.

A CMA may recertify by taking the Certification Examination. This examination is updated and reconstructed annually. This method is available for the basic CMA credential only.

CONVENTIONS & SEMINARS

It is the custom in most state societies to allow the chapters to bid as host of the annual convention and educational seminars. Some states elect to host the annual convention as a society. State educational seminars are usually held in the fall and winter. State conventions are usually held in the spring. The state will award the hosting of this event to a chapter after a majority vote. The bylaws should stipulate how seminars and conventions are assigned if no bids are received.

The first and most important appointments are the chair and vice-chair. The vice-chair must be ready to assume the duties of the chair in the absence of the chair.

The next step is to select a site that will have ample room to handle the number of attendees, ample meeting room space and ample meal function space. The state president will provide the chapter with the dates, times and room arrangements for any necessary meetings. The speaker of the house or presiding officer of the general assembly will provide the chapter with the room arrangements, date and time for the House of Delegates/General Assembly.

Some states will provide the hosting chapter with an advance for convention expenses, such as the minimum amount required to open a checking account for the convention. This amount is returned to the state treasury as soon as the chapter has funds available.

The following points should be confirmed in writing with the hotel:

1. Available guest rooms and rates.
2. Space and proper equipment for registration.
3. Meeting rooms facilities and access to visual aids for the speakers' use. Be sure to obtain the cost of this equipment and meeting rooms. Usually meeting room cost is waived by the hotel if a certain number of registrants are also registered as hotel guests.
4. Facilities for all meal functions as required.
5. Selection of menus and costs of all meals including tax and tips. Sometimes hotels cannot project food prices one year in advance; be sure to take the cost of inflation into account when setting registration fees.
6. Any special room arrangements for state president and visiting AAMA representative. Some hotels will provide a suite for the state president or AAMA representative if this is planned in advance and contained in the written contract with the hotel.

The state and/or chapter should then decide upon a theme for the convention/seminar so all committees can begin their work.

The members of the previous hosting chapter will be able to provide invaluable information about the financial and other responsibilities of the hosting chapter.

CONVENTIONS & SEMINARS (CONTD)

CHAPTER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Appoint a chair and vice-chair. Remember: the vice-chair should be able to serve in the absence of the chair.

Suggested committees:

1. Budget and Finance
2. Decorations
3. Donations and Door Prizes
4. Entertainment
5. Exhibitors
6. Hospitality and Reception
7. Printed Program
8. Program and CEUs
9. Protocol officer
10. Publicity and Promotion
11. Registration

The above suggested committees are meant to serve as a guideline. Each chapter is responsible for determining its own needs.

The committee chairs under the direction of the general chair make up the convention/seminar board and coordinate these activities. This board should hold regular meetings and make regular reports on progress. It is recommended that reports be written for record keeping purposes.

CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES:

-General duties-

The chair is responsible to the state board of directors and should look to them for advice. The chair will preside at all meetings of the convention/seminar board and appoint committees as necessary. It is vital to maintain communication with each committee to keep abreast of its progress and accomplishments.

-Specific duties-

- Should meet with the hotel representative periodically to ensure appropriate meeting arrangements.
- Secure hotel site as soon as possible (state board of directors may need to approve site).
- Seek approval of program from state board of directors as soon as possible.
- Set deadline for registration and hotel reservations (will need to have forms printed for distribution to membership).
- Coordinate program and registration information publication with state bulletin editor (will need to be aware of publication deadlines for submission of this information in an appropriate time frame).

Prepare final report for chapter/state board of directors (usually submitted within 30 days of event; includes detailed financial report noting income and expenses; any profit and/or advance will be forwarded to state treasurer as outlined in state bylaws and/or policy manual).

CONVENTIONS & SEMINARS (CONTD)

COMMITTEE DUTIES:

1. Budget and Finance
 - establish a budget
 - EXPENSES: postage, printing, name badges, speaker expenses, entertainment, exhibits, meals/refreshments, equipment rental.
 - INCOME: registration fees, donations, exhibit space rental, etc.
2. Decorations (optional)
 - Plan/prepare table decorations for meal functions
 - Prepare and stay within budget
3. Donations and Door Prizes (optional)
 - Collect door prizes from chapters, local merchants, etc.
 - Collect donations/door prizes from pharmaceutical companies
 - Provide list of donors/donations for publication in program
4. Entertainment (optional)
 - Plan entertainment during meal functions (installation banquet or other functions)
 - Prepare and stay within budget
5. Exhibits
 - Contact exhibitors
 - Obtain rental fee for space as set in the budget
 - May choose to include meal fee in rental fee to allow exhibitors to attend meal functions
 - Arrive early on day of exhibits to welcome and assist in setup
 - May arrange a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open event
 - Prepare/provide a registration packet (program, name badges, meal tickets, etc.)
6. Hospitality and Reception
 - Plan welcoming event/hospitality function (if planned)
 - Plan entertainment/refreshments
7. Printed program
 - Coordinate publication with chair, printer
 - Program should include:
 - schedule of events
 - list of state board of directors
 - speaker information
 - other pertinent information
8. Program and CEUs
 - Coordinate educational speakers and business meeting needs
 - Allow time for attendees to view exhibits

CONVENTIONS & SEMINARS (CONTD)

- Choose speakers for knowledge in given field
 - Obtain written confirmation of presentations
 - Request CV information
 - Invite speaker to meal function nearest their presentation
 - Provide chair with program information for presentation for state board approval (usually 3-6 months in advance of seminar/convention)
9. Protocol officer
- Plan seating for guests and speakers
 - May be responsible for AAMA Representative (travel from/to airport and hotel, meals, etc.)
10. Publicity and Promotion
- Prepare articles/notices promoting seminar/convention
 - Arrange for publications of above in:
 - state publications
 - local newspapers
 - fliers for distribution to offices, hospitals, etc.
11. Registration
- Maintain list of all registrants
 - Prepare registration packets to include:
 - meal tickets
 - name badges
 - program
 - etc.
 - Provide accurate meal count to hotel
 - Coordinate scheduling of workers to coincide with registration times published in program

FINAL REPORT

The general chair is responsible for coordinating the preparation of the final report to the chapter and state board of directors. This report should be submitted within 30 days of the event. The final report will include a detailed financial report of the income and expenses. Any excess of revenue over expense will be forwarded to the state treasurer as outlined in the state bylaws and/or policy manual.

MEMBERSHIP

The state society should assist the chapters in nurturing and recruiting members. This committee may consist of the membership chairs from each of the component chapters. A copy of the AAMA Membership Manual may be requested from the AAMA Executive Office to help in membership efforts.

Membership must start at the chapter level so the member will progress to the state and national level. The membership committee must work on an active, full time basis to promote the chapter, state and national membership benefits to stimulate interest and maintain membership in AAMA.

In order to promote membership, this committee must know the benefits of belonging to AAMA and take the time to know the prospective member. It is important to know what the member expects from AAMA and be able to answer those needs and/or offer alternatives to his/her objections. One way is to survey the membership each year to determine the members' needs.

It is suggested that a membership brochure be developed for the state society and include the benefits both for the employer and employee of belonging to AAMA. Be sure to keep an ample supply of membership brochures and applications available for distribution.

This committee should also contact all new CMAs in the area to invite them to the meetings. The list of new CMAs is sent to each state president approximately three weeks after the scores have been mailed to the examinees. The president should then forward this list to the membership chair.

Follow up on all referrals and contact potential new members as soon as possible.

Societies are encouraged to develop an informal mentoring program that allows new members to interact with veteran members. This helps the new members to feel welcome and to learn about the state society and how it functions.

Membership retention is sometimes harder than recruiting new members. Communication is the first and most effective step in fulfilling the needs of the members and keeping them interested in the organization.

Other suggestions include a society newsletter, distribution of membership roster to each member with a form for each member to make address or employment corrections, recognition of professional achievement of members, recognition or special award for long term members and the distribution of information from the state and national level on their activities.

The AAMA presents awards at its annual convention for societies with greatest increase in membership and membership retention. Information regarding the criteria for these awards is available from the AAMA Executive Office.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee is elected by the membership at a society's annual meeting. This committee usually consists of a chair and two members.

The president CANNOT serve on this committee in any capacity.

The duties of this committee are to solicit candidates for the offices of president-elect, vice president, recording secretary and treasurer. The committee also checks to see if each nominee meets the qualifications for each office as outlined in the bylaws. It should also be noted that the persons considered for candidacy should be those which possess proven leadership qualities and commitment to the society's goals.

The committee submits a written report to be presented to the membership. It is recommended that the slate of nominees with their qualifications be sent to all society members prior to the election. This gives the members an opportunity to review the candidates and decide on those which will best meet the needs of the society.

A member of the nominating committee may be selected as a candidate for office provided he/she meets all the qualifications listed in the bylaws.

The president or speaker of the house will ask for the chair to read the report to the members and then call for nominations from the floor before the election is held.

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The duties of this committee are to keep the membership informed on any proposed legislation, regulations, and court decisions pertaining to the medical assisting and allied health professions.

This committee usually consists of a chair and two members and maintains communication with the state public policy committee chair for the legislative issues.

If there is any significant development affecting medical assistants and other allied health professionals, a report should be given at the monthly meeting. If necessary, a newsletter may be sent to the general membership.

This committee may also contact AAMA Executive Director Don Balasa at 1-800-ACT- AAMA with any questions or issues regarding public policy that will have an impact on medical assistants.

PUBLICITY/PUBLIC SERVICE

The purpose of this committee is to communicate to the general public the activities of the society, the medical assisting profession, and the benefits of belonging to all three levels of AAMA. Good publicity builds recognition for the organization, educates the general public and promotes membership.

Suggestions for this committee are to advertise the state society conventions and seminars, educational programs, and activities during Medical Assistants Recognition Week.

The committee should develop and maintain contacts with the news media, be truthful in the information that is distributed, be positive in the comments given to the press, remain cool and calm when being questioned by the press and invite members of the press to attend meetings or workshops.

If asked to appear on radio or television, be sure that AAMA is mentioned in the comments, know the focus of the story and rehearse several times before the appearance, forget the cameras, look at the interviewer and appear confident and relaxed.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) should be sent to the local radio, television and newspapers and should be free of charge. Always send AAMA fact sheets with the news releases. Releases should be factual, typed, double-spaced and sent in duplicate. Send a thank you letter after the release is published.

The AAMA Communications Department has a variety of resources available to help this committee and they can be contacted by calling 1-800-ACT-AAMA.

WAYS AND MEANS

The ways and means committee is responsible for developing and implementing money-making projects throughout the state's year in order to supplement the state's working capital. Often the state shares in the profits obtained from state sponsored seminars and conventions with the hosting chapter(s).

This committee is appointed by the president with the approval of the board of directors and usually consists of a chair and three members.

New projects must have the approval of the board of directors prior to their implementation. A budget for the project should be presented to the board at the time of presentation. Some suggestions for other projects include the sale of T-shirts, sweatshirts, key chains, cookbooks, raffles (if allowed by your particular state and local laws), and white elephant sales.

The efforts of the ways and means, education and membership committees should be coordinated so their projects will not interfere but will complement each other.

DELEGATES/ALTERNATES TO AAAIA

State societies send delegates to the AAMA House of Delegates annually in accordance with the membership of the society and the AAMA bylaws. Delegates and alternates must be active members in good standing.

1. Delegates are elected for a period of one year from the opening of the House of Delegates until the next opening of the House of Delegates and must be familiar with the bylaws of the state society and AAMA.
2. Delegates should review the material presented in delegates packets (mailed).
3. Delegates should discuss the material with the state society membership.
4. Delegates need to be familiar with parliamentary procedure as it pertains to the election of officers, amendments to bylaws, the presentation of resolutions and other new business in the House of Delegates.
5. Alternate delegates should be as well prepared as the delegates, since they may need to assume the duties of the delegates at any time.
6. Delegates and alternate delegates may be called upon at any time during the annual meeting for any business; therefore, they should be prepared to forego other activities.
7. Delegates represent their state societies when voting at their annual meeting. Decisions should be made based upon the general welfare of AAMA, the state society and the chapters. Delegates should use their judgment when voting on issues presented.
8. The chapter president and president elect/vice president are usually the first two delegates. Chapters vote for the additional delegates and alternate delegates.
9. Delegates are expected to attend all reference committee meetings, all business meetings (including the House of Delegates), meeting the candidates and any other meetings, as directed by their state society.
10. Delegates should report the proceedings of the annual meeting to their society at their first state meeting following the AAMA convention.
11. If an alternate delegate must replace a delegate, the parties involved should contact the Speaker of the House and the credentials committee immediately.
12. If a delegate/alternate is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the office, he/she shall reimburse the state society for any monies given for this assignment.

LEGAL ISSUES OF RELEVANCE TO STATE SOCIETIES AND LOCAL CHAPTERS

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN)

In order to open a checking account or transact other business, a state society or local chapter will often be required to furnish an Employer Identification Number (EIN) (also known as a “Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)”). Aside from the practical necessity of having an EIN, the AAMA recommends that each affiliated state society and local chapter obtain an EIN.

An entity need not have employees in order to obtain an EIN. (The term Taxpayer Identification Number is therefore more accurate than Employer Identification Number). A state society may not and should not use the EIN of the AAMA for any purposes. Similarly, a local chapter should not use the EIN of its state society. It is also most inadvisable for a state or chapter to use the Social Security number of one of its officers or members as the identifying number required by a financial institution.

An Employer Identification Number can be obtained quickly and easily by filling out and submitting Form SS-4. This federal form can be obtained from an Internal Revenue Service office, a Social Security office, a bank or library, or from certain state or local government offices. Form SS-4 is not difficult to complete, and there is no fee for submitting the form. An EIN can also be obtained via an 800 number and the internet. If there are any questions about how to complete the form, please call Executive Director Donald A. Balasa at the Executive Office of AAMA.

FEDERAL INCOME TAX EXEMPTION

The American Association of Medical Assistants is exempt from federal income tax according to Section 501(c) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code. The section accords an exemption to professional associations that demonstrate compliance with the organizational and operational requirements of the law.

The AAMA does not have a group exemption which covers its state societies and local chapters. Therefore, any AAMA affiliate must file for its own exemption from federal income tax if it so desires. IRS Form 1024 is used for applying for an exemption under Section 501(c)(6). Unlike Form SS-4, Form 1024 is rather long and difficult to complete. Although some state societies and local organizations have obtained an exemption letter from the IRS, there are many factors which must be considered when deciding on the wisdom of seeking federal income tax exemption. Please contact Donald Balasa, AAMA Executive Director at 1-800-ACT-AAMA if you have questions about whether to, and how to, apply for this exemption.

INCORPORATION

Incorporation is a process whereby a state society or local chapter is recognized as a formal legal entity. Incorporation is governed by the laws of each state rather than by federal law. As a result, a department of the state office of Secretary of State (or similar state office) usually has jurisdiction over the incorporation of not-for-profit entities.

Incorporation offers some benefits for state societies and local chapters, the primary one being the limitation of liability to the assets of the society or chapter if a civil action is successfully brought against the society/chapter. However, because state and local affiliates vary in the degree of potential legal liability, the prudence of incorporation should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

LEGAL ISSUES OF RELEVANCE TO STATE SOCIETIES AND LOCAL CHAPTERS (CONT'D)

The cost and complexity of incorporating varies from state to state, but it is usually not an expensive or difficult process. Nevertheless, there are legal and practical factors which should be examined thoroughly before embarking upon the process of incorporating. Executive Director/Legal Counsel Donald A. Balasa is available to assist states and locals in determining whether incorporation is advisable.

EXEMPTION FROM STATE SALES TAX AND OTHER STATE TAXES

It is important to distinguish between exemption from federal income tax and exemption from state sales' tax. In virtually every state, professional associations exempt from federal income tax on the basis of 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code are NOT eligible for exemption from state tax (or other similar state levies) when purchasing products at stores, renting space at hotels or motels, or entering into contracts for the purchase of services. Only charitable, religious, and similar entities are eligible for any special sales tax exemption.

Obtaining federal income tax exemption, or incorporating as a not-for-profit entity under the laws of a state, usually have nothing to do with procuring an exemption from state (and sometimes local) sales and use tax. There may be reasons for obtaining an income tax exemption letter from the IRS and a certificate of incorporation from the Secretary of State, but attempting to secure an exemption from state sales tax is not one of the reasons. In reality, the AAMA and its state and local affiliates are almost never eligible for state sales tax exemption, and should not think that submitting Form 1024 to the Internal Revenue Service or filing articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State will have any effect on becoming exempt from state sales tax.

STATE SOCIETY OR LOCAL CHAPTER WILL NOT GET INTO TROUBLE IF IT ACCUMULATES MONEY IN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT, MONEY MARKET FUND, OR OTHER INVESTMENT VEHICLE

Generally, state societies and local chapters will not get into trouble with federal or state authorities and not jeopardize their tax-exempt status or their not-for-profit incorporation if the interest earned on investments is intended to be used to further the professional purposes of the society or the chapter.

Usually, there is cause for concern only if the society or chapter has accumulated an enormous amount of reserves, and the society/chapter is not operating in a manner consistent with its purpose of "promoting the professional identity and stature of its members and the medical assisting profession through education and credentialing."

It is a good economic practice to have on reserve one year's expenditures so that if unexpected expenses occur it will keep the society in the "black."

CHAPTER FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT

The basic organization of AAMA is the local chapter. In densely populated areas, there may be more than one chapter in an area. In sparsely populated areas, local chapters may draw members from more than one county/area.

State societies are responsible for encouraging the formation of local chapters and for managing those component chapters. A Chapter Management Guide is available from the AAMA Executive office that contains detailed information on how to form a chapter. It is suggested that the state society obtain a copy of this guide and make it available to those members interested in forming new chapters.

Included in this guide are appendices:

- > Appendix A: New Chapter Checklist
- > Appendix B: Inactive Chapter Procedure
- > Appendix C: State Society Disbandment

Any questions or issues regarding the local chapter should be referred to the AAMA Director of Membership, who can provide advice and guidance.

APPENDIX A

New Chapter Checklist

Local chapters are chartered by and directly affiliated with a state society. State societies are chartered by and directly affiliated with the American Association of Medical Assistants. When a state has chartered a new chapter they notify the AAMA Executive Office in Chicago so that the new chapter can be created in the data base. The Executive Office must be notified in writing by the current state society president. When the Executive Office receives all the information about the name, location, officers and members for the new chapter they are given a chapter code. At that point members can be assigned to that chapter and dues will be collected for and rebated to that chapter. Below is a checklist of information that the Membership Department needs to complete the entry for a new chapter.

- Letter From The State Society President
 - > The letter must be on state society letterhead
 - > The letter should be addressed to : Director of Membership, AAMA
20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1575
Chicago, IL 60606-2903
 - > The letter should notify the Executive Office of the newly affiliated/chartered chapter.
 - > The letter should give the official name of the chapter and the charter/affiliation date.

The information below should be attached to, or contained in, the letter from the state president:

- Geographic Boundaries of the Local Chapter
 - If the geographic boundary of a chapter is not a county line, please include a map of the area with the chapter boundaries drawn on it. The Membership Department will transfer this information onto the chapter maps that are used to assign members to local chapters.
- Chapter Officers
 - Chapter officers must all be AAMA members.
 - Use the “Chapter Officer Election Notification Form” if possible.
 - Please include the president, president elect or vice president, treasurer and a membership chair/contact person.
- List of Current Members That Should Be Changed To The New Chapter
 - The Membership Department can provide you with a list of “at-large” members residing in the area of the new chapter. At-large members are those that are not assigned to a local chapter. Please provide a zip code range for the Membership Department to use when searching the database for members in the new chapter area. These members will not have paid local chapter dues and will not be billed for chapter dues by the Executive Office until the next dues billing cycle in September.

The Membership Department will print new membership identification cards for the members of the new chapter. If you have any questions, please call the AAMA Membership Department at (800) 228-2262.

APPENDIX B INACTIVE CHAPTER PROCEDURE

The AAMA membership department adds new chapters and deletes disbanded chapters from the database only when notified by the state society. As long as a chapter remains active in the data base AAMA will continue to assign new members to that chapter and collect and rebate dues. When the chapter is identified as “disbanded” in the database, all the members in that area become members-at-large on the chapter level. If a chapter is identified as “disbanded” in the database we would need written notification from the state society to reactivate the chapter.

At times, the Executive Office has had requests for a chapter to become “inactive” for a period of time rather than disband and be deleted in the database. State societies have expressed a desire to keep a chapter in the database while it is reorganized.

An alternate to disbanding an inactive chapter would be a temporary “inactive” status. The state treasurer could be assigned as treasurer for that chapter. This would enable all chapter dues to be rebated to the state treasurer for management of those funds until the chapter was reorganized and had new officers. The state would be responsible for contacting the members assigned to that chapter regarding the inactive status of the chapter. The state society would have to decide to refund the dues or hold them for the chapter until the chapter is reorganized. The chapter dues and member information would be sent separately from the state society dues rebates. This would have the advantage of identifying the members assigned to a chapter so the state society could work with that group to get reorganized.

A chapter should be maintained as an inactive chapter, without officers or meetings, for more than one year. If a chapter cannot be reorganized and active within one year the chapter should be disbanded and the members given the option of another chapter or at-large status.

PROCEDURE: If a state society chooses to manage an inactive chapter during a reorganization effort they should follow this procedure: First, the state society must be certain that this procedure is not in conflict with their state bylaws or with the wishes of the members in the chapter.

Second, the president of the state society should notify the AAMA Membership Department that a chapter has become “inactive” and the state society will take responsibility for managing the chapter funds during the reorganization period. The letter should be on state society letterhead and provide the following information:

- ✓ Name of the chapter.
- ✓ Name of the state treasurer who will be assigned as treasurer of the chapter.
- ✓ Name of the contact person that members of that chapter should call if they have questions about their chapter status.

When a chapter has been reorganized, the state society should send written notification to the AAMA Membership Department providing the following information.

- ✓ Name of the chapter
- ✓ A list of the chapter officers.
- ✓ Request to lift the inactive status of the chapter and remove the state treasurer as the chapter treasurer.

Note, when there is a change in a state treasurer, the Executive Office must be notified of the change for the state, and of any inactive chapters that the state treasurer is managing, so that all records can be correctly updated. If you have any questions regarding this procedure, please call:

AAMA Director of Membership, 1-800-228-2262

APPENDIX C STATE SOCIETY DISBANDMENT

How it will affect Members and Local Chapters

Individual Members

Members in states without an affiliated state society are called members-at-large. These members only pay national dues and have all the national benefits of AAMA membership that they currently enjoy (e.g., *CAM Today*, discounts on products and services, group insurance, etc.) They will not be receiving any benefits from an affiliated state society. If a state society disbands, the AAMA Membership Department will change the state codes for the members and issue them new membership cards that reflect the change to member-at-large on the state and local chapter level.

Local Chapters

Local chapters are chartered by and directly affiliated with the state society that is affiliated with AAMA. If there is no state society for the local chapter to be affiliated with, then the link of affiliation to the AAMA is broken and the local chapter will cease being affiliated with the AAMA. This will have the following effect on local chapters:

Dues collection:

New members sending dues to the Executive Office will only pay national dues and be assigned as a “member-at-large” with no state society or local chapter affiliation.

Continuing Education Program Approval:

AAMA CEU program approval processing for affiliated state societies, and local chapters affiliated with those state societies, is provided free of charge. A program submitted for AAMA CEU credit approval that is not sponsored or co-sponsored by an affiliated state society, an affiliated state society’s local chapter, or a CAAHEP accredited medical assisting program must have an approved sponsor. Non-affiliated organizations may apply for Independent Sponsor status. The annual fee for Independent Sponsorship is \$500.

Mailing Labels:

Mailing labels for membership promotion purposes or continuing education programs are provided free of charge to local chapters that are affiliated with an AAMA affiliated state society.

If you have any questions about this information, please call the AAMA Membership Department toll-free at 1-800-228-2262.